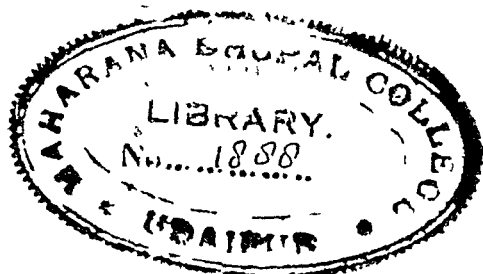


SONGS OF BÉRANGER.
TRANSLATED INTO
ENGLISH VERSE BY WILLIAM
TOYNBEE.

181

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WALTER SCOTT
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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
My Coat	13
The Broken Fiddle	16
To my Friends become Ministers	19
Horrid Spring'	22
The Garret	24
The Vagabond	27
The Old Colours	166
Off to the Country	169
My Little Corner	173
The Boxers; or, Anglo Mama	176
The Village Epicurean	177
Poland !	181
Epigram	181
My Curé	
The Swallows	
Good-Night !	
An Epicurean's Prayer	
The Grandmother's Tale	

	PAGE
Rosette	60
My Tomb	62
The Beggar-Woman	64
The Little Man in Grey	67
"When I am Gone"	70
The King of Yvetot	72
The Marquis of Carabas	75
Mary Stuart's Farewell	79
The Marionettes	82
Spring and Autumn	84
All in All	86
Epigram	88
Poniatowski	89
The Outcast	92
Letter	95
Aut	98
	101
	105
	107
Temporal	110
Sensors	114
	116
Good Folk	117
	120
Child	122
	124

841

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CONTENTS.

	7
	PAGE
The Whipper-snappers	127
The Crown	129
The Nightingale	132
The Cossack's Song	134
A Metamorphosis	138
My Calling	142
The Wiseacre	144
The Refusal	146
My Republic	149
The Old Singer	151
My Independence	154
A Forecast	157
The People's Orpheus	160
My Shallop	163
Bouquet	166
The Old Fiddler	169
Fifty Crowns !	173
A Thanksgiving	176
My Farewell	177

NOTES	181
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PREFACE.

PIERRE JEAN DE BÉRANGER was born on the 19th August 1780, and died on the 16th July 1857. His life extended over the most momentous period of his country's history; he witnessed the storming of the Bastille, and he refused a pension from the Second Empire.

If in the highest sense of the word something less than a Poet, Béranger was indisputably the prince of Singers. Teeming with the keenest of satire, the tenderest of pathos, the archest of gaiety, it was from Humankind that he invariably drew his inspiration. Tears and Laughter, Love and Friendship, Glory and Heroism, above

all, Liberty, were the themes on which he rang the changes with inexhaustible fire and sweetness. Sprung from the People,—a fact in which he never ceased to exult—it was of and to the People that he loved best to sing. His every note found an echo in their hearts. He soothed their sorrows, he sympathised with their joys, he kindled their patriotism. To France he was infinitely more than even Burns was to Scotland, or Moore to Ireland, the spell of his song was unparalleled, and, perhaps, Posterity could award him no fitter title than that of the last and greatest of National Minstrels.

To those who are able to read Béranger in his own exquisite language these translations are not addressed, but any who lack that advantage may, it is hoped, derive from them some impression, however faint, if not of the Singer, at least of the Man. Several of these renderings appeared in a smaller selection published a few

years ago, but for reasons which will be readily understood, the songs paraphrased by Mr. Thackeray were left untouched. These have now been attempted, not from any diminished diffidence on the part of the translator, but because in a series which, like the present, aims at being representative, the songs in question could not properly be omitted.

W. T.

SONGS OF BÉRANGER.



MY COAT.

My humble friend, forsake me not !

We both are ageing by degrees ,
I've brushed you ten long years, a lot

Worthy of even Socrates !

When upon evil days you fall,

And holes in dire profusion start,
Like me, be sternly Stoical !

My dear old coat, we'll never part !

Well can I recollect the day

When Destiny first made you mine,
Comrades were gathered round me gay,
To keep my fête with song and wine ,

MY COAT.

Your poverty—'twas, too, my pride—
Has caused me not a single smart ;
Those friends still rally to my side ;
My dear old coat, we'll never part !

You boast a darn, which to the last
I lovingly shall call to mind ,
One night, from Rose retreating fast,
I felt a sudden snatch behind !
We tussled, you were torn in two ;
It cost her dear that desperate dart,
She took a week to tinker you !
My dear old coat, we'll never part !

By perfumes you were ne'er defiled
Such as infest a coxcomb's glass,
Into no ante-room beguiled
Where courtiers sycophantic pass ,
When France to Stars resigned her soul,
For Ribands made an open mart,
A daisy decked your button-hole !—
My dear old coat, we'll never part !

Ah, well, we've little more to fear,
Our chequered course will soon be run,
There'll soon be truce to smile and tear,
To shadow interspersed with sun !
For the last garb of all, good friend,
I must prepare to nerve my heart,
No matter ! we'll together end,
My dear old coat, we'll never part !

THE BROKEN FIDDLE

EAT away, my poor dog, eat away,
Never mind if I can't take my share,
There's just a cake left for to-day,
And to-morrow on crusts we must fare !

The foreigner cut-throats last night,
As I played on the green to our folk,
Cried, "A dance !" I refused, so in spite
My poor fiddle to pieces they broke

'Twas the band of the village ! Farewell,
Joyous fêtes, happy days ! ne'er again
Will it quicken the foot of the belle,
Or embolden the heart of the swain !

How merrily on marriage morn,
As the bridegroom stood waiting to hear,
From its string would the signal be borne
That the bride was at last drawing near !

Not the sternest of priests could resent
The frolics it roused in the ring,
And one strain of its sweet merriment
Would have smoothed e'en the brow of a king'

If it tuned in our glory's full glow
Now and then to a soul-stirring song,
Little dreamed I the foreigner's blow
Would requite it one day for the wrong'

Eat away, my poor dog, eat away,
Never mind if I can't take my share;
There's just a cake left for to-day,
And to-morrow on crusts we must fare'

Ah, how saddened in barn and in field
On a Sunday will now be the scene!
And how think you the vintage will yield,
When I fiddle no more as they glean?

At its music the poor ceased to brood;
The most dreary of toil 'twould relax,
And bring solace, when nothing else could,
For oppressor, and tempest, and tax!

It subdued the fierce workings of hate,
Stayed the tear, howe'er bitter its flow,
Ah ! believe me, no sceptre of state
E'er did half so much good as my bow !

Well, the cut-throat I'll thank to his face,
For the courage at last he's awoke,
A stout blade shall to-morrow replace
The poor fiddle he yesterday broke !

And they'll say, if I perish perchance,
" Ah, his tunes were the life of our sward,
Till the foreigner called for a dance,
Then he flung down his bow for the sword !"

Eat away, my poor dog, eat away,
Never mind if I can't take my share ;
There's just a cake left for to-day,
And to-morrow on crusts we must fare !

TO MY FRIENDS BECOME MINISTERS

No, no, my friends, my wants are few,
Elsewhere with your good things make free,
Courts may be well enough for you,
But spread no royal snare for me.
All that I ask is Love's caress,
Blithe comrades, and a crust of bread,
Bending my lowly cot to bless,
"Be nothing," the Almighty said.

Splendour would but embarrass me,
Who idly sing from day to day;
Were Fortune's crumbs my share to be,
"I've never earned them," I should say;
On honest Labour's humble board
More fitly far they would be spread;
At least my wallet's amply stored!
"Be nothing," the Almighty said.

TO MY FRIENDS.

One day upwafted in a dream,
 From Heav'n I gazed down on the world;
 There, all in one vast living stream
 Were monarchs, nations, armies swirled;
 I heard a shout, 'twas Victory's strain;
 One name from realm to realm was sped—
 Ye Great, and thus your glories wane!
 "Be nothing," the Almighty said

Nevertheless, all praise to you,
 Intrepid pilots of the realm,
 Who bidding each his ease adieu,
 Haste to the storm-struck vessel's helm;
 "Good luck," I holloa from the shore,
 "Right nobly may you speed ahead!"
 Then in the sun I bask once more—
 "Be nothing," the Almighty said.

Your graves will be superb, no doubt,
 Mine but a nameless mound of grass;
 Crape-covered crowds will see you out,
 I in a pauper's hearse shall pass;

Yet, to us all doom is but doom,
Your glow is quenched, my glimmer fled,
The only difference is the tomb !
“ Be nothing,” the Almighty said

Then, let me be myself once more,
To pomp I make my last salute,
Behind your grandly-gilded door
I've left my hobnails and my flute !
Tho' Freedom, to us both so sweet,
Your painted halls need never dread,
I'll pipe her praises in the street !—
“ Be nothing,” the Almighty said

HORRID SPRING.

WE'VE loved the whole long winter now,
She at that window, I at this;
But if we love, we never bow,
And only at a distance kiss !
Thro' the bare branches of that plane,
It was our one delight to peer,
And now it's almost green again !—
Spring, are you coming every year ?

Yes, she's been spirited away,
The charming angel I espied
Relieving, the first frosty day,
Her feathered pensioners outside
'Twas time to love, I used to know,
The instant I saw them appear;
If I adore one thing, it's snow !—
Spring, are you coming every year ?

But for you, I might watch her still,
Each morning as she hastes to rise,
As fresh as ever painter's skill
Reveals Aurora to our eyes ;
But for you, I might still exclaim,
"The setting of my star is near ;
She sleeps ; I miss her candle's flame"—
Spring, are you coming every year ?

Oh, for the winter back again !
If only I could hear once more
The sharp hail crackle on the pane,
And see it fretted with the hoar !
A fig for all your fabled wiles !
Buds and long days may cost too dear ;
Haven't they robbed me of her smiles ?—
Spring, are you coming every year ?

THE GARRET.

YES, here's the old room where I roughed it so long
In the penniless days I ne'er cease to regret,
When a scapegrace of twenty I lived but for song,
A few cheery friends, and the charms of Lisette!
In the prime of Life's spring-tide, ne'er taking
account
Of the world and its ways, or what Fate had in
store,
How gaily up six flights of stairs would I mount !
Ah, give me my youth and a garret once more !

A garret ! the fact I am proud to confess !
Over there stood the pallet which served as a bed,
Here tottered my table, and can it be ? yes,
On the wall a rude stanza is still to be read !
Dear simple delights of Life's rose-tinted dawn,
Too soon by Time's tyranny doomed to be o'er,
How often my watch for your sake would I pawn !—
Ah, give me my youth and a garret once more !

See, here comes Lisette tripping airily in,
A flower in her bonnet coquettishly twined,
How pretty she looks standing tiptoe to pin
Her shawl o'er the window in place of a blind !
Thanks, too, to the skirt she slips laughingly down,
The lack of a quilt we've no need to deplore ,
(I didn't know then who had paid for the gown !)
Ah, give me my youth and a garret once more !

Then that carnival night, when beginning to troll
Some hoisterous carol of folly and fun,
We heard the far boom of artillery roll—
Napoleon had vanquished ; Marengo was won !
How it broke into triumph our bacchanal song,
Mighty France our one theme, and the Laurels
she wore !
Where were now all the kings who had braved her
so long ?
Ah, give me my youth and a garret once more !

Farewell, beloved scenes of a long-vanished past,
Whose every bright moment 'tis bliss to recall !
Were my years ev'n a century longer to last,
For one hour of those days I would barter them all !

Magic era of Glory and Love and Delight,
When the whole of Life's wine at one banquet
we pour,
And the Iris of Hope seems forever in sight !—
Ah, give me my youth and a garret once more !

THE VAGABOND.

THIS ditch will do ; yes, here I'll die !
 Could Misery find a fitter grave ?
They'll think I'm drunk, the passers-by ,
 Let them, and so their pity save !
Some with a sneer will turn away,
 Some toss me possibly a "sou" !—
On to the fair ! don't mind me, pray ;
 Why should my dying trouble you ?

Yes, I am dying of old age,
 For hunger never kills, you see !
I'd hoped the workhouse might assuage
 My last few hours of misery ;
But every workhouse overflows,
 Such numbers are like me forlorn ;
So in the gutter, I suppose,
 I'll have to die, as I was born !

When young, the workmen I would pray
To teach me how to earn my bread ;
“ What ! when for ours we scarce can pay?
Off to the streets and beg ! ” they said
“ Work,” said the rich ; but, there, I own,
Upon their straw I’ve often lain,
Grubbed from their dung-heaps many a bone,
So of the rich I can’t complain !

I could have been a thief, I knew,
But I preferred to beg, somehow ,
At times I’ve snatched an apple, true,
From off an overhanging bough ,
But in his Majesty’s snug cell
I’ve pretty dearly had to pay !
I had at least the sun , ah ! well,
They even took the sun away !

What country have the poor to claim ?
What profit us your wine and corn,
Your commerce, your immortal fame,
Your hosts of statesmen heaven-born ?

When on your smoking walls last year
The foreigner loot-laden stood,
Think you for France I shed that tear?
No, 'twas because he gave me food !

Better to crush us 'neath your heel,
As you crush Nature's crawling scum,
Than only let us live to feel
What by your aid we might become !
Once sheltered from the nipping blast,
The grub grows to the ant, and I
My blessings on you might have cast—
Now, hear me curse you as I die !

THE OLD COLOURS

SURROUNDED by the comrades brave
Of many and many a glorious fight,
Over the kindling wine to-night
I summoned memory from the grave
And while each field anew we fought,
Yon drooping colours met my eye,
"Ah, shall I ne'er again," methought,
"See them unfurled before I die?"

Beneath my humble thatch they hang,
A worn-out veteran's single prize;
Emblem of countless victories,
Whose fame thro' all creation rang!
For twenty years with glory fraught
From field to field they waved on high;
"Ah, shall I ne'er again," methought,
"See them unfurled before I die?"

To France they fifty-fold repaid
The blood that set her brave sons free;
Upon the lap of Liberty
Our babes their lance a plaything made!

Gaze on them, tyrants, and be taught
How glory like a gleam flits by !
" Ah, shall I ne'er again," methought,
" See them unfurled before I die ?"

Their Eagle in the dust lies low,
Wearied with battle's ceaseless shock ,
But have we not the Gallic Cock
Who braved of old so many a foe ?
No longer by defeat distraught
Once more we'll hoist them by-and-by ,
" Ah, shall I ne'er again," methought,
" See them unfurled before I die ?"

If shorn awhile of Victory's pride,
So long their appanage, what then ?
Each soldier is a citizen ;
They'll still be found on Duty's side !
France, to the verge of ruin brought,
With new-born hope they shall supply ;
" Ah, shall I ne'er again," methought,
" See them unfurled before I die ?"

And here, in my poor hovel here,
They hang upon this very wall !—
My flag, my pride, my hope, my all
Come wipe away a soldier's tear !
A soldier's tear ! O thus besought,
Can Heav'n my humble prayer deny ?
No, no, once more—ah ! glorious thought,
I'll see you float before I die !

•

OFF TO THE COUNTRY

Up from your pillow, graceless Rose,
Daybreak at last begins to peer,
At last yon solemn chimes disclose
The hour you promised to be here
Far from the city's whirl and heat
We'll with our happiness retreat ,
Yes, to the country let us rove,
And learn what it can teach of love !

The verdure of the Spring we'll press,
Ranging the meadows hand in hand,
And taste that deeper tenderness
Which Nature only can command
The birds from every glen and glade
Call us to join them in the shade ,
Then to the country let us rove,
And learn what it can teach of love !

We'll live the village life, we two ,
Daybreak shall see us gaily rise,
And with the first fall of the dew
Slumber once more shall seal our eyes

OFF TO THE COUNTRY.

You'll hardly then complain, my Rose,
Of the long day that never goes !
Come, to the country let us rove,
And learn what it can teach of love !

When Summer to the golden fields
Beckons the reaper once again,
And each stroke of the sickle yields
The gleaner, too, her share of grain,
What stolen kisses won't we spy
Behind the tall sheaves, you and I ?
Come, to the country let us rove,
And learn what it can teach of love !

As Autumn presses from the vine
Its streams of nectar, by the vat
We'll sit and watch the bubbling wine,
And listen to the old folks' chat,
Of old days dead, old ditties sung
When love was love, and they were young.
Come, to the country let us rove,
And learn what it can teach of love !

Along the river-banks we'll stray
Just as one does in dreams, you know ;
And ever as we roam away,
More languid will your footsteps grow
Beneath us cool the mosses are,
The grass is soft, the world afar !
Come, to the country let us rove,
And learn what it can teach of love !

We're off ! Parade and pomp, farewell !
Paris, I turn my back on you ,
In art and splendour lies your spell,
I worship one that you eschew.
Come, Rose, we'll veil from envious eyes
How to make earth a paradise !
Quick, to the country let us rove,
And learn what it can teach of love !

MY LITTLE CORNER.

No, life for me has lost its spell,
 All that I ask for now is rest ;
 Too long have I been doomed to dwell
 Where Pleasure only palls at best.
 I've burst my bonds and got away,
 A galley-slave at last set free ;
 So leave me in my corner, pray,
 My little corner none can see !

There, daring Power to do its worst,
 I weigh the wrongs existence brings,
 Weep for the nations tyrant-curst,
 Judge and pass sentence on the kings ;
 Boldly predicting Freedom's sway,
 The future's page I scan with glee ;
 Then leave me in my corner, pray,
 My little corner none can see !

Here, with a wizard's wand endowed,
 For good alone I use my trust,
 Direct to Justice the sophies proud,
 And every palace doom to dust ;

We're off! Parade and pomp, farewell!
Paris, I turn my back on you;
In art and splendour lies your spell,
I worship one that you eschew.
Come, Rose, we'll veil from envious eyes
How to make earth a paradise!
Quick, to the country let us rove,
And learn what it can teach of love!
do go astray,
and care of me,
er, pray,
e can see!

THE BOXERS; OR, ANGLO-MANIA.
(1814)

WHEN not required his hat to scan,
"God-dam!" I like your Englishman,
 He's so refined in character,
Is so polite, has always graced
His pleasures with such perfect taste!
Well, let's hope we, as we advance,
May worship fisticuffs in France
 As they do in proud old England, Sir!

Picture the boxers over here!
First we've our bets to book, that's clear,
 A notary by, in case we err!
A real fight this, if you want fun,
And not their favourite two to one!
Well, let's hope we, as we advance,
May worship fisticuffs in France
 As they do in proud old England, Sir!

That's it! and now just please admire
These gentlemen, their choice attire,
 Their grace, what could be gracefuller?

“A brace of butchers !” some one sneers ?
I’ll wager they’re a brace of peers !
Well, let’s hope we, as we advance,
May worship fisticuffs in France
As they do in proud old England, Sir !

There, ladies, what d’you say to that ?
For you as arbiters have sat ;
What, to applaud them you demur ?
Look at that blood, and then refrain !
God ! aren’t your Englishmen humane !
Well, let’s hope we, as we advance,
May worship fisticuffs in France
As they do in proud old England, Sir !

England, we’ll copy you post-haste,
Your laws, your fashions, your good taste,
Evn to your strategy defer !
When we’ve done envying, that is,
Your horseflesh and your embassies !
Well, let’s hope we, as we advance,
May worship fisticuffs in France
As they do in proud old England, Sir !

THE VILLAGE EPICUREAN.

TAKE note of this, ye gentry who
Your self-made sorrows mourn !
Unblest with ev'n a single "sou"
Blithe Pierre le Gros was born ;
At ease to live, eschewing fame,
Of discontent the foe—
Such, Sirs, the modest end and aim
Of jolly Pierre le Gros !

A hat, the product you'd suppose
Of his great-grandsire's day,
With ivy now, and now with rose
Perennially gay !
A suit of sacking, first possest
Some twenty years ago—
Such, Sirs, the wardrobe at its best
Of jolly Pierre le Gros !

A pack of cards, a flageolet,
A table, an old bed,
An empty chest, a silhouette,
(His sweetheart's be it said) ;

A jug which Providence takes care
Shall never cease to flow —
Such, Sirs, the utmost wealth can spare
To jolly Pierre le Gros !

Instructor to the little folk
In games of every kind,
Profuse with pleasantry and joke
More racy than refined ;
In country dance and catch and glee
His knowledge prompt to show —
Such, Sirs, the whole proficiency
Of jolly Pierre le Gros !

Since costly brands he cannot get,
Content with common wine,
Preferring chubby-cheeked Nannette
To damsels superfine ;
With loving kindness brimming o'er,
With harmless mirth aglow —
Such, Sirs, the philosophic lore
Of jolly Pierre le Gros !

Humbly to fall upon his knees
And to his Father say,
“ Pardon me if my life displease
By being a thought too gay ,
I ask but till the end to share
The bliss that now I know ”—
Such, Sirs, the unpretending prayer
Of jolly Pierre le Gros !

Ye Poor, who filled with envy fret,
Ye Rich, whose pleasures pall,
Ye Great, who striving more to get
Too oft are stript of all ;
Ye kings, who see your crowns depart,
Your dynasties laid low,
A lesson learn and learn by heart
From jolly Pierre le Gros !

POLAND !

How would I live my life again?

Why, Mars this time should be my star ,
I'd get a fierce moustache in train,
And be a dare-devil Hussar !

Not such as yon sword-danglers are !
No, like the wind you'd see me spur
And charge for Poland's hapless brave !
What, and France too must play the cur ?
Up, and wake Honour from the grave !

Ah, had this heart its once high beat,
I'd win the fairest of the fair,
Just to say "To your saddle, sweet,
As is the way with women there !
What they have dared, you too shall dare !
Sell trinkets, gewgaws, all, no stint ;
And, while there's still a life to save,
Strip all your linen into lint !"
Up, and wake Honour from the grave !

More—could I lay hands on the gold,
I'd scour Sarmatia with the cry,
" Rally your legions, lion-souled,
Arms, ammunition, all, I'll buy,
Name but your needs, and I'll supply !
For Europe, who her carcase drags
On crutches, Wealth's decrepit slave,
Revolts at Valour in her rags ! "
Up, and wake Honour from the grave !

Were I a king, the Muscovite
Would hardly find my squadrons loth !
Their every blade should bare for fight,
And shame the Crescent from its sloth !
Sweden should rise, and flanked by both,
" Poland ! " I'd cry, " our flag's unfurled,
And this, the sceptre that I wave,
Can reach the confines of the world ! "
Up, and wake Honour from the grave !

Ah, could I be for one brief hour
That God whom Poland kneels before,
How think you first I'd prove my power ?
The Czar should see the dawn no more !
Yes, I'd be Poland's to the core !

With miracles (for such she needs),
With miracles her path I'd pave,
And quench the stars her conqueror reads !
Up, and wake Honour from the grave !

Up! but of what avail to dream?—
Great King of Liberty, befriend !
O'er Poland in her hour supreme
From Thy far throne of Justice bend '
Make me her guardian-angel ! Lend
To my faint song Thy Voice profound,
Till earth and all the seas that lave
Earth's every shore, one anthem sound,
"Up, and wake Honour from the grave!"

EPIGRAM.

(Written on a collection of MS verses)

If I were a king, king of catch and of song,
As is whispered sometimes in my ear,
Your redoubtable muse would before very long
Prove a dangerous rival, I fear.
For the precepts she lays so impressively down
To the People, that pestilent thing,
Would one of these days play the deuce with my
crown,
If I were a king !

MY CURÉ

OUR Curé's busied o'er the task
Of emptying last season's cask

Now that the Autumn's near ;
And blessing God, with man at peace,
Thus he harangues his little niece
(Just turned her sixteenth year).

" Bring me no tales ; what use to fret ?
Those whom the Devil wants he'll get !
So there, there, there, God's will be done !
Give me a kiss, my pretty one,
And let us be hard on none !

" 'Tis only for the wolves I keep
A rod in pickle, for poor sheep
Who would a scourge employ ?
No, no, say I, take my advice,
Peace is a very Paradise
Each of us may enjoy !
Then above all my code ordains
Never to preach except it rains !

MY CURÉ

So there, there, there, God's will be done !
Give me a kiss, my pretty one,
And let us be hard on none !

" On Sundays should my flock be bent
On seeking pleasures innocent

I seldom interfere

And if in church (where oft, *entre nous*,
I'm priest and congregation too !)

Their revelry I hear,

Why, I step over to the inn

And beg for just a shade less din

So there, there, there, God's will be done !

Give me a kiss, my pretty one,

And let us be hard on none !

" If, as my daily rounds I ply,

A case of frailty I espy,

The fact I don't proclaim

Who's free from sin, when all is said ?

And if a moon too late they wed,

I've not the heart to blame ;

Moralists, doubtless, fault will find,
But Heav'n and Suzanne will not mind !
So there, there, there, God's will be done !
Give me a kiss, my pretty one,
And let us be hard on none !

" Our mayor, a trifle lax in creed,
Lends to my sermons little heed,
But ah, he'll be forgiven !
For 'tis a fact, as well I know,
That with both hands he loves to sow,
Observed of none save Heaven !
God of his deeds will record keep,
As he has sown he too shall reap !
So there, there, there, God's will be done !
Give me a kiss, my pretty one,
And let us be hard on none !

" At every dinner I preside,
Flowers for my fête-day all provide,
My cask ne'er wants for wine ;
Embittered with a bigot's gloom
Our Bishop prophesies my doom,—
But ah, may it be mine

MY CURÉ.

Some day in yonder Land of Rest
To meet all those I here have blest !
So there, there, there, God's will be done !
Give me a kiss, my pretty one,
And let us be hard on none ! "

THE SWALLOWS.

A PRISONER on Morocco's shore

Thus from his chains was heard to sigh

"Ah, do I gaze on you once more,

Ye birds that from the winter fly?

Bright swallows whom, as on ye glance,

Hope heralds o'er the burning sand ;

Surely you must have flown from France,

And tell me of my native land !

"How oft I've prayed you just to bring

One blossom from the far-off vale,

Where in my boyhood's joyous Spring,

The future told so fair a tale !

Beside a flowering lilac tree,

Where a brook's ripples idly roam,

Our cottage you must often see !

Ah, now you tell me of my home !

"Some nest of yours may chance to lie

Close to the room where I was born,

And there you've heard the plaintive cry

Wrung from a mother's heart forlorn,

THE SWALLOWS.

On yonder door her gaze she keeps,
Waiting in vain to see it move,
And when I come not, how she weeps !
Ah, now you tell me of her love !

“ My sister, is she married yet ?
And did you watch our village-folk
From daybreak till the sun had set
Keeping her fête beneath the oak ?
My playmates, too, who with me learned
How soon Youth’s dream of glory ends ;
Have any to their homes returned ?
Ah, now you tell me of my friends !

“ No, o’er their corpses marching back,
The conqueror thro’ our vale careers,
Beside my hearth to bivouac,
And fill my sister’s home with tears !
My mother’s voice no more I hear,
My days beneath these fetters close,
Ah, swallows of my country dear,
You tell me only of my woes ! ”

GOOD-NIGHT!

WITH a clink, dear old friend, with a clink,
To the rapturous days that are dead,
To the days of our youth let us drink,
And sigh for each pleasure that's sped !
Yet not in despondency, no !
With laughter we'll put her to flight !
When it's time for us, comrade, to go,
Let it be with a merry good-night !

Fifty winters you've weathered it here,
Mine also are fast flitting on,
Yet have they not wholly been drear,
For each shadow a sunbeam has shone !
Had riches rained on us their flow,
Would they, think you, have bettered our
plight ?
When it's time for us, comrade, to go,
Let it be with a merry good-night !

With the muses you put me to nurse,
I've eclipsed you, yet little you care ;
Tho' denied every blessing but verse,
Could we change it for any more fair ?

GOOD-NIGHT !

In our carols the Past with its glow
Shall waken again into sight ;
When it's time for us, comrade, to go,
Let it be with a merry good-night !

But see, it grows dark, and no doubt,
Gay Cupid our playmate of yore,
Should he happen to spy us will shout,
"Your day, my fine fellows, is o'er !"
But Friendship will not flout us so,
Thro' the gloom she will guide with her light ;
When it's time for us, comrade, to go,
Let it be with a merry good-night !

AN EPICUREAN'S PRAYER.

LOVE, tho' from thy full harvest-field
Death plucks the golden grain,
Oh, thaw the hearts by grief congealed,
And kindle them again.
Against the promptings of despair
Let thy sweet impulse plead,
And if the harvest Death must share,
Cease not to sow the seed !

THE GRANDMOTHER'S TALE.

One winters night, as this might be,
I heard a knocking at the door;
I opened it, great heavens! 'twas he!
A couple in his wake, no more;
Then sinking down upon a seat,
Ay, 'twas upon this very chair,
He gasped 'Defeat! ah God, defeat!'"—
"What, Grandmother, he sat down *there*,
He sat down *there*?"

"He called for food; I quickly brought
The best I happened to have by;
Then when his dripping clothes were dry,
He seemed to doze awhile, methought;
Seeing me weeping when he woke,
'Courage,' he cried, 'there's still a chance;
I go to Paris, one bold stroke,
And Paris shall deliver France!'
He went, the glass I'd seen him hold,
The glass to which his lips he'd set,
I've treasured since like gold, like gold!"—
"How, Grandmother, you have it yet,
You have it yet?"

"'Tis there But all, alas, was o'er ;
He, whom the Pope himself had crown'd,
The mighty hero world-renown'd,
Died prisoner on a far-off shore
For long we none believed the tale,
They said that he would reappear,
Across the seas again would sail,
To fill the universe with fear !
But when we found that he was dead,
When all the shameful truth we knew,
The bitter, bitter tears I shed !"—
"Ah, Grandmother, God comfort you,
God comfort you !"

ROSETTE.

ROSETTE.

WHAT! all oblivious of your youth,
On me your myriad spells you'd ply,
Who, to confess the fatal truth,
Have seen full forty summers fly !
On me, whose one flame hitherto
Has been a cotton-gowned coquette !
Ah, if I only could love you
As once I used to love Rosette !

Your carriage whirls you every day
In satins—who can guess their worth ?
Rosette with just a riband gay
Skimmed laughingly her mother-earth,
While right and left her glances flew
To keep me in a constant pet !
Ah, if I only could love you
As once I used to love Rosette !

As down your velvet pile you pass,
Grand mirrors greet you everywhere,
Rosette had but one looking-glass,
The Graces must have put it there !

No damask round her bed she drew,
Her sleep the sun could never fret '
Ah, if I only could love you
As once I used to love Rosette !

You've earned, thanks to your pretty wit,
More than one poetaster's meed ;
Well, I'll unblushingly admit,
Rosette knew scarcely how to read,
But Cupid always pulled her through,
If in a fix she chanced to get
Ah, if I only could love you
As once I used to love Rosette !

In looks she came behind you far,
Nor indeed had she half your heart ;
Those eyes of yours much gentler are
When a poor lover lisps his part '
But Youth, bright Youth, a glamour threw
Over her charms which glimmers yet—
Ah no, I never can love you
As once I used to love Rosette !

THE BEGGAR-WOMAN.

WHERE the snow flakes whirl over yonder flags
A woman kneels hand-outspread,
The ice-wind pierces her wretched rags
As she prays,—can it be for bread?
Those cathedral gates are her daily goal,
Let the weather be what it may,
And, saddest of all, she is blind, poor soul;
For pity's sake turn not away!

Know you what she was once, that woman there,
So haggard and broken-down?
At the opera none was a tithe so fair,
And her voice was the talk of the town,
Let her move them to laughter or melt to tears,
Their homage all flocked to pay,
Day and night she bewitched them, heart, eyes,
and ears
For pity's sake turn not away!

How often, as swiftly her carriage swept
From the stage-door, would she hear
The crowd that had worshipped, as out she stept,
Speed her homeward with cheer on cheer!

And then when she deigned to go out and sup,
What a bevy of gallants gay
Would compete for the honour of handing her up!
For pity's sake turn not away !

What a triumph was hers when its emblems rare
Were proffered by every art !
What bronzes, what marbles, what gems were
there,
Fond tributes from heart to heart !
At her banquets how Flattery's fair-weather
throng,
As the wine in each breast made play,
Would ply her with plaudit and toast and song !
For pity's sake turn not away !

At the terrible change ! in one hour she lost,
At one blow, both voice and sight,
And lonely and poor on the world was tossed
To beg as she begs to-night.
Twenty years have I watched that imploring hand,
Whose alms in Prosperity's day
No suppliant ever were known to withstand
For pity's sake turn not away !

More wildly than ever down whirls the snow,
Her limbs are benumbed with cold,
And the beads she has now grown to fondle so
Her fingers can scarcely hold
May her gentle heart 'neath its weight of woes
Still summon up strength to pray,
Till she passes at last into Heaven's repose !
For pity's sake turn not away !

THE LITTLE MAN IN GREY.

IN Paris there's a little man all dressed in dapple
grey,
With chubby cheeks and cheery heart he goes upon
his way,
And when he peers into his purse and finds there's
nothing there,
Instead of being in doleful dumps he simply doesn't
care !

“ For you see,” chirrup he,
This merry mannikin,
“ The only way to be gay
Is not to care a pin !
Not to care, not to care,
Not to care a pin ! ”

What with a relish for good wine, and weakness
for grisettes,
He's managed somehow to incur a tidy crop of
debts,

But when the bailiff And the dun he meets upon
 the stair,
 Instead of quaking in his shoes he simply doesn't
 care !

"For you see," chirrup he,
 This merry mannikin,
 "The only way to be gay
 Is not to care a pin !
 Not to care, not to care,
 Not to care a pin !"

When thro' the roof the rain at night drips down
 upon his bed,

"Trenched pillow case he plumps his
 ad,
 i with cold, returning home, he finds
 bare,
 eing right and left, he simply doesn't

"For you see," chirrup he,
 This merry mannikin,
 The only way to be gay
 not to care a pin !
 o care, not to care,
 to care a pin !"

When underneath his tattered quilt he's tortured
with the gout,
And by his side the priest proceeds his errors to
point out,
Exhorting him to mend his ways or for the worst
prepare,
Instead of turning penitent he simply doesn't care !

"For you see," chirrups he,
This merry mannikin,
"The only way to be gay
Is not to care a pin !
Not to care, not to care,
Not to care a pin !"

*"WHEN I AM GONE."**"WHEN I AM GONE"*

You will grow old ; ah yes, my sweet,
Grow old, and I shall be no more
Time flies for me now far more fleet
Than in the days that I deplore.
Live when I'm gone, if God so will,
But to my teaching still be true ;
And by your fireside falter still
The songs I used to sing to you !

When musing what was once their spell
Those features worn, that hair of snow,
The young folk fain would have you tell
Who was the friend you mourn for so,
Paint them my love, how it could thrill,
Its follies, ev'n the doubts it threw,
And by your fireside falter still
The songs I used to sing to you !

They'll ask, " Was he so winning then ?"
" I loved him," calmly you'll reply
" Had he no faults this best of men ?"
" None " you'll avow with kindling eye,

"And plaintively as it could trill,
His lute," you'll say, "was joyous too!"
Then by your fireside falter still
The songs I used to sing to you!

You whom I taught to weep for France,
Tell those who then her banners bear,
How "Glory" was my utterance,
And "Hope," when hers was all despair;
While Fortune, in a night turned chill,
Our laurels never ceased to strew,
Yes, by your fireside falter still
The songs I used to sing to you!

My dearest, when my frail renown
Soothes sometimes your declining hours,
When with a trembling hand you crown
My portrait every Spring with flowers,
Look up where safe from age and ill
We'll meet at last beyond the blue,
And till we meet, ah, falter still,
The songs I used to sing to you!

THE KING OF YVETOT

THERE flourished once a potentate,
Whom History doesn't name,
He rose at ten, retired at eight,
And snored unknown to Fame !
A night-cap for his crown he wore,
A common cotton thing,
Which Jeannette to his bedside bore,
This jolly little king !
Ho, ho, ho, ho ! Ha, ha, ha, ha !
This jolly little king !

With four diurnal banquets he
His appetite allayed,
And on a jackass leisurely
His royal progress made.
No cumbrous state his steps would clog,
Fear to the winds he'd fling ;
His single escort was a dog,
This jolly little king !
Ho, ho, ho, ho ! Ha, ha, ha, ha !
This jolly little king !

He owned to only one excess,—
He doted on his glass,—
But when a king gives happiness,
Why that, you see, will pass !
On every bottle, small or great,
~~For which he used to ring,~~
He laid a tax inordinate,
This jolly little king !
Ho, ho, ho, ho ! Ha, ha, ha, ha !
This jolly little king !

Such crowds of pretty girls he found
Occasion to admire,
It gave his subjects double ground
For greeting him as Sire !
To shoot for cocoa-nuts he manned
His army every Spring,
But all conscription sternly banned
This jolly little king !
Ho, ho, ho, ho ! Ha, ha, ha, ha !
This jolly little king !

He eyed no neighbouring domain
With envy or with greed,

And, like a pattern sovereign,
Took Pleasure for his creed !
Yet, 'twas not, if aright I ween,
Until his life took wing,
His subjects saw that he had been
A jolly little king !
Ho, ho, ho, ho ! Ha, ha, ha, ha !
This jolly little king !

This worthy monarch, readers mine,
You even now may see,
Embellishing a tavern-sign
Well known to you and me !
There, when the fête-day bottle flows,
Their bumpers they will bring,
And toast beneath his very nose
This jolly little king !
Ho, ho, ho, ho ! Ha, ha, ha, ha !
This jolly little king !

THE MARQUIS OF CARABAS.

(1816)

WHOM have we here in conqueror's rôle ?
Our grand old Marquis, bless his soul !
Whose grand old charger (mark his bone !)
Has borne him back to claim his own.
Note, if you please, the grand old style
In which he nears his grand old pile,
With what an air of grand old state
He waves that blade immaculate !

Hats off, hats off, for my lord to pass,
The grand old Marquis of Carabas !

“ Ho ! almoners, chamberlains, appear !
Vassals, sub-vassals, serfs, I'm here,
I, the great Marquis, who alone
Replaced my monarch on his throne—
And now his Majesty's restored,
Let him my lawful rights accord !
If not, if he refuse to do it,
Corbleu ! his Majesty shall rue it ! ”

Hats off, hats off, for my lord to pass,
The grand old Marquis of Carabas !

“Tho’ on my blood to cast a slur,
They’ve hinted at a blacksmith, sir,
The head of my historic line
Sprang from the loins of Charlemagne !
Indeed, you’d in a twinkling see,
Could you but scan my pedigree,
That, matched with my descent, *parbleu*,
The King himself’s a parvenu !”

Hats off, hats off, for my lord to pass,
The grand old Marquis of Carabas !

“Who to my claims shall dare demur ?
Marquise, you’ll have the Bedchamber ,
Our second son shall take his pick,
Let’s say, a good fat bishopric ;
Our first-born, the lord viscount, though
Not over-valiant, as we know,
Fancies a cross would meet his views ;
Well, he has only got to choose !”

Hats off, hats off, for my lord to pass,
The grand old Marquis of Carabas !

“And now, for God’s sake let me be!—
But who’s that talks of taxing me?
Show me the code that dares create
A marquis debtor to the State!
Let them a single *son* exact,
And by a round of grape-shot backed,
I’ll teach them one of these fine days
To own the error of their ways!”

Hats off, hats off, for my lord to pass,
The grand old Marquis of Carabas!

“Priests, you have plenty to repair;
Levy the tithes and let us share.
Brutes of the soil, I’ll have you broke
To crouch once more beneath the yoke;
And not a finger on the game!
Stay, there’s one privilege you may claim.—
The first-fruits of your corn and wine.
You’re still allowed to add to mine!”

Hats off, hats off, for my lord to pass,
The grand old Marquis of Carabas!

“You, curié, to your office see !
Incense is my monopoly
Varlets and pages, hearken well,
Belabour till the vermin yell !
For my posterity, be sure,
Shall every sacred right secure
Which (ere the Devil made the masses)
God granted to the Carabases !”

Hats off, hats off, for my lord to pass,
The grand old Marquis of Carabas !

MARY STUART'S FAREWELL

FAREWELL, farewell, thou beauteous clime,
Scene of so many a joy gone by !
Land of my girlhood's golden prime,
Farewell ! to leave thee is to die !

Homeless, in thee I found a home,
From which I now afar must flee ;
But tho' to alien shores I roam,
Ah, cease not to remember me !
The billows sweep the vessel's side,
The wind is waking o'er the main,
Ah, why will Heaven not turn the tide,
And give me back to thee again ?

Farewell, farewell, thou beauteous clime,
Scene of so many a joy gone by !
Land of my girlhood's golden prime,
Farewell ! to leave thee is to die !

When, lily-crown'd, thro' all the air
 I heard thy people's plaudits ring,
 Was it because a queen stood there,
 Or Mary in her beauty's spring?
 Of what avail to vaunt the sway
 Of Caledonia's drear domain?
 Her sceptre I'd resign for aye
 To be one hour thy sovereign!

Farewell, farewell, thou beauteous clime,
 Scene of so many a joy gone by!
 Land of my girlhood's golden prime,
 Farewell! to leave thee is to die!

'Mid Glory's glow, and Love's delight,
 My days have passed in bliss supreme,
 But yon bleak wilderness of blight
 Will all too soon dispel the dream!
 With coming ill my heart is fraught,
 Dead phantoms round my pillow flock,
 Last night awaiting me, methought
 There loomed the scaffold and the block!

Farewell, farewell, thou beauteous clime,
Scene of so many a joy gone by !
Land of my girlhood's golden prime,
Farewell ! to leave thee is to die !

Ah, France, my France, when doom draws near,
When woe-begirt I end my days,
To thee who now my sobs dost hear,
To thee I'll turn my weeping gaze !
Slowly the shore recedes from sight,
Out o'er the surf my bark is tost,
And in the deepening gloom of night
The last faint glimpse of thee is lost !

Farewell, farewell, thou beauteous clime,
Scene of so many a joy gone by !
Land of my girlhood's golden prime,
Farewell ! to leave thee is to die !

THE MARIONETTES

THE marionettes, my friends, I sing,
Of every age the sport ;
Your peasant, no less than your king,
In cottage and in court,
Lampooner, lacquey, sycophant,
Prude, devotee, coquette,
(Not counting marionettes who rant !)
Is each a marionette !

Man, flushed at finding he can walk,
His power proceeds to boast ;
He here may strut, and there may stalk,
So rules, forsooth, the roist !
Poor puppet, only let him wait
Till Fortune's snares are set !
Come, my good sir, accept your fate,
You're but a marionette !

That dainty pearl of innocence
Love puts to such sweet pain,
Thrilling her heart-strings with a sense
Her head cannot explain ;

All night awake, all day adream,
Now tranced, now in a fret—
Ah, what a prize must Cupid deem
That pretty marionette !

Yon gallant spouse Parisian
Whom everybody greets,
Last night into your arms he ran,
To-day he shuns the streets ;
Now jealousy he's fain to scout,
Now fans a jealous pet—
He too, there's not the slightest doubt,
Is but a marionette !

And what with Woman is our part ?
Why, just a doll's well-wired !
"There, my fine fellow, off you start
And jig until we're tired !"
Ay, debonair or dunderhead,
One treatment we all get—
Thank God, he's but a single thread,
Your luckless marionette !

SPRING AND AUTUMN.

Two seasons in life reign supreme
With all who to Pleasure incline,
In Spring we make flowers our one theme,
In Autumn we vaunt but the vine
Days lengthen—the rose has her spell,
They wane—for the vintage we sigh
In Spring to the bottle farewell,
In Autumn to Cupid good-bye !

'Twould be far more attractive, no doubt,
The dual enjoyments to blend,
But the pace, as most people find out,
Gets a trifle too brisk in the end ;
So in order sedately to dwell,
I determined this system to try—
In Spring to the bottle farewell,
In Autumn to Cupid good-bye !

In May I first chanced on Rosette,
And succumbed in a trice to her smiles ;
But she soon wore me out, the coquette,
With her whims, and caprices, and wiles .

Tho' I waited to fairly rebel
Till October's first flagon ran dry—
In Spring to the bottle farewell,
In Autumn to Cupid good-bye !

'Twas Belle who next wandered my way ,
She provoked neither transport nor tear
"I'm off," she informed me one day,
And didn't come back for a year
'Twas Autumn—said I "Charming Belle,
Here's a precept I always apply .—
In Spring to the bottle farewell,
In Autumn to Cupid good-bye ! "

And now with a Hour I'm blest,
Who my pleasures ordains at her will ,
To wine she imparts a new zest,
To love she supplies a new thrill !
In short, the real truth if I tell,
My rule she's resolved to defy—
To the bottle it's never farewell,
To Cupid it's never good-bye !

ALL IN ALL

WHAT'EER Philosophy may preach,
 I've a prodigious greed for gold !
 Were Ophir's wealth within my reach,
 'Twould all at Adèle's feet be rolled !
 To gratify her, in a trice
 O'er the four continents I'd flee !
 I've not a spark of avarice,
 But Love—I dote on Love, you see !

A laureate's art I've been denied,
 But if, like some, I shone in rhyme,
 Granting Adèle the theme supplied,
 My songs, I'm sure, would be sublime !
 SOur names in metre deftly knit
 I d'ould be sufficient fame for me !
 In Springy I don't care a bit,
 In Autumn—I dote on Love, you see !

In May I first chant^e should place
 And succumbed in aⁿbeian head,
 But she soon wore me out^ely case,
 With her whims, and cap^t, my stead !

Even a levée-dress I'd sport,
If so it pleased her to decree !
Ambition I disdain to court,
But Love—I dote on Love, you see !

In sooth I've not a single need,
Adèle to me is all in all ;
The best that Earth bestows, indeed,
Compared with Love is bound to pall !
Heav'n for my happiness I thank ,
From every freak of fortune free,
I've neither glory, wealth, nor rank ;
But Love—I've boundless Love, you see !

EPIGRAM.

(Written in a lady's album.)

ON this album whenever you gaze,
'Twill recall an old bard I'll not name,
Who, bewitched by your thousand sweet ways,
Their dupe for a moment became.
Fell in love? not a whit! Love, the elf,
Had long ago ceased to enthrall;
He but took, vain old fool, to himself
The sunshine you showered upon all!

PONIATOWSKI

WHAT, flying ! you, the victors of the world !
Hath Leipsic brought your vaunted hosts to bay ?
Flying ! and in the Elster's eddy swirled
All the dire wreck and ruin of the fray !
Men, horses, arms, in headlong chaos thrown
Athwart its flood, the river rages by,
Deaf to entreaty, sob, and shriek, and moan—
“Help, Frenchmen, help, ah, leave me not to die !”
“Help ! who cries help ? a curse on him !” they shout,
“On, on, and if the hindmost falls, he falls !”
On, on they rush, ne'er pausing in the rout,
Tho', pierced with wounds, 'tis Poniatowski calls !
Panic has stifled pity, on they speed,
No hand, no heart, responding to his cry ;
The ruthless torrent tears him from his steed—
“Help, Frenchmen, help, ah, leave me not to die !”
He sinks—no, see, one desperate struggle more,
And to the mane he clings with frenzied hold ;
“What, drown !” he cries, “while still upon the shore
The bayonets clash, the cannon's boom is rolled !

Comrades ! your help ! my life has served your need,
How I have loved you let these wounds reply !
Save me, if but for France once more to bleed—
Help, Frenchmen, help, ah, leave me not to die ! ”

On, on they sweep , his hand lets loose the mane .
“ Poland, my country, fare thee well ! ” he cries ;
And then there bursts upon his dying brain
A glorious vision wafted from the skies !
’Tis the White Eagle that at last awakes
And over slaughtered Russia swoops on high ;
Loud on his ear the hymn of victory breaks !—
“ Help, Frenchmen, help, ah, leave me not to die ! ”

In vain—one last faint gasp, and he is gone,—
The enemy bivouacs by the Elster’s reeds—
Years have rolled past but still, as day grows wan,
A voice from those lone waters wildly pleads,
A voice which, floating up thro’ Heaven’s far gates,
By God is echoed back from out the sky,
Till with its anguish Earth reverberates,
“ Help, Frenchmen, help, ah, leave me not to die ! ”

'Tis Poland's supplication that we hear'

Poland, that hath for France so often bled,
Poland, who for the honour she holds dear,

Unmurmuringly her blood's last drop hath shed'
Like him who in the Elster's flood that day

Perished for France without one helper nigh,
Across Death's gulf to us doth Poland pray

" Help, Frenchmen, help, ah, leave me not to die' "

THE OUTCAST.

So the world's at a loss to guess
How I come by my *De'* infer's
I've, too, a craze for *vieille noblesse* ?
I, noble? God forgive you, sirs !
I'm none of your nobility,
Ancient or any other style ;
I love France—that's enough for me !
And for the rest, why, I'm *Canaille*—
Canaille, sirs, rank *Canaille* !

Heav'n only knows why I should bear
This *De* you all so vastly prize !
For my poor sires enjoyed their share
Of a *grand seigneur's* tyrannies :
One of your real *grands seigneurs*, mind,
Who deigned to play the millstone, while
They were the grain for him to grind !
Noblesse ? Lord love you, I'm *Canaille*—
Canaille, sirs, rank *Canaille* !

My sires were no broad-acred lords
With serfs to trample in the mud ;
No bravos they, whose lacquered swords
Made merry with the peasants' blood !
They held not Freedom in disdain
To fawn on Clovis for a smile,
O! kiss the hem of Pepin's train !
Noblesse ? Lord love you, I'm *Canaille*—
Canaille, sirs, rank *Canaille* !

With fellow-countrymen for foes
My fathers' spurs were never won,
They never hailed in France, God knows,
The hated Arms of Albion !
Nor when the State to ruin's brink
Was well-nigh brought by Priesthood's guile,
Were their pens steeped in Treason's ink
Noblesse ? Lord love you, I'm *Canaille*—
Canaille, sirs, rank *Canaille* !

Leave me, then, to my lowly rôle !
Yes, you, who, snuffing Fortune's breeze,
Patricians of the button-hole,
Worship each new sun on your knees

I'm of the dregs ! but then, you see

(Cynics aren't after all so vile !),

I only flatter Poverty !

Noblesse ? Lord love you, I'm *Canaille*—

Canaille, sirs, rank *Canaille* !

A BIRTHDAY LETTER.

(From the King of Rome to the Duke of Bordeaux)

My heartiest greetings I send
On your Highness's début in life ;
Fortune figures no doubt as your friend,
With the richest of promises rife !
So it was at the time of my birth ;
Kings crowded their homage to pay,
Round my cot cringed the lords of the earth—
And yet I'm an exile to-day !

The minstrels who made me their theme,
In you the same interest take ;
At christening functions they seem
As much in request as the cake !
For your baptism rite, I opine,
The Seine will the water purvey ;
They sent to the Jordan for mine—
And yet I'm an exile to-day !

The same parasitical crowd
That for you such a future foresees,
When I was their idol, avowed
That the Lilies must yield to the Bees !

Ev'n the nurse in whose arms I was borne
Had her servile patrician array
To proffer their homage each morn—
And yet I'm an exile to-day !

With laurels my couch was laid out,
You merely in purple recline ,
A rattle's your plaything, no doubt,
A sceptre was wont to be mine !
For my cap I a crown was decreed ;
From a Pontiff 'twas taken away,
While prelates applauded the deed—
And yet I'm an exile to-day !

Your marshals, so braggartly brave,
Will serve but your fortunes to foil ;
Base tinsel is all that they crave,
From Honour's pure star they recoil !
To my sire they were bound by an oath
He believed they could never betray ,
All was staked on their oft-vaunted troth—
And yet I'm an exile to-day !

Should yours ever grow a great name,
When mine is forgotten on earth,
Put the time-serving traitors to shame
By recalling the tale of my birth !
As their lies in your ear they outpour,
Of your cousin remind them, and say
" Thus also to him ye once swore,
And yet he's an exile to-day ! "

THE COURT SUIT.

Far from the Court where, sooth to say,

Beauty is art, and Love a leer,

To Rose's room I haste away,

Where none can see and none can hear

And there my coat, I can't deny,

Makes Rose first smile, and then grimace ;

To the winds went his Majesty,

And with him went my suit of lace !

And so my giddy dream is gone,

I find myself myself once more ;

My nightcap once again I don,

And in my attic soundly snore !

And, gentle reader, by-the-bye,

You'll please remember that in case

You want to wait on Majesty,

You're welcome to my suit of lace !

HARLEQUIN.

(A Funeral Oration)

HE'S gone farewell to gaiety !

He's gone . farewell to quips and cranks !
No more he'll cheer us with his glee,

No more he'll charm us with his pranks !
His mirth and motley all the year

Made every moment joyous spin ,
Then, ah, a tear, a tear, a tear

Upon the grave of Harlequin !

Our age so wonderfully wise,

So well equipped with Learning's keys,
Ne'er dreamed that his fantastic guise

Concealed a second Socrates !

Clio, unclasp your tablets bright,

Fame everlasting let him win,
In golden letters write, write, write
The history of Harlequin

Tho' to a high-born abbess he

His birth indubitably owed,
For his patrician pedigree
No sort of reverence he showed.

The Bishop, too, his noble sire,
He disavowed with shrug and grin ;
Ah, then admire, admire, admire
The sound good sense of Harlequin !

With martial emulation fired,
In early days a pike he bore,
But with a wound or two retired,
To ply his craft from door to door.
With song to silence every sigh
Was his receipt thro' thick and thin ;
Ah, if we all would try, try, try
The panacea of Harlequin !

Cheerily scrubbing every morn
His humble sabots thus he'd sing :
"Tho' Wealth my wooden shoes may scorn,
They well are worth the polishing !
For where's the leather that would make
A pair I'd trip so lightly in ?"
Ah, then a lesson take, take, take
From philosophic Harlequin !

“Uncover for the King !” they’d cry,
“With all my heart,” he’d answer pat,
“If he’ll take off his crown, while I
Remove my ragamuffin hat !
Faith ! if my head at all I bare,
’Tis with the baker I’ll begin !”—
Ah, well if all would share, share, share
The honest pride of Harlequin !

“Why want,” they’d hint, “for daily bread,
When loyal songs command a fee ?”
“Never,” he’d cry, “shall it be said
My stage encouraged Tyranny !”
“To prison then, away with you !”—
“Who for your prisons cares a pin ?”
To Freedom ever true, true, true,
All his life long was Harlequin !

“D’you want a priest ?”—“Parbleu, not I.
Black coats were never in my line ;
In opposite directions lie
Their mummeries, you see, and mine !

Their creed I deem preposterous,
Mine they pronounce a deadly sin !"—
Ah, well, for us, for us, for us,
The simple faith of Harlequin !

Sirs, the good friend for whom we grieve
Owned to one failing and but one ;
His mother was a child of Eve,
And he was—well, his mother's son !
Of the forbidden apple he
Ate every morsel, pip and skin !—
Ah, never, never, never, we
Shall find the like of Harlequin !

FIFTY!

THESE flowers denote a fête? Ah, no,
 A fast they rather should portray!
For I've jogged thro' this world of woe
 Just half a century to-day!
Ah, how the years like lightning fly,
 Ah, how the hours unhallowed flit,
And then the crow'sfoot round the eye!
 I'm fifty, and be hanged to it!

Yes, I'm the age when all's askew;
 Mildewed the fruit, and sere the tree.
A knock! ah, knock till all is blue,
 You'll get small change, sir, out of me!
Some scoundrel of a quack, I'll bet,
 Who snuffs an apoplectic fit,
Once I'd have sworn it was Lisette!
 I'm fifty, and be hanged to it!

O'er Age a thousand horrors creep,
 Now with the gout one's doomed to writhe,
Now blindness builds her dungeon deep,
 Or deafness makes our dear friends blithe,

Last, Reason's lamp, long faint of flame,
Becomes to all intents unlit
Youth, your respect we well may claim —
I'm fifty, and be hanged to it !

Hark, I hear Death upon the road,
Rubbing his grisly hands in glee ,
He's dug his ditch, awaits his load
" Make your farewells, my friend," snarls he.
Up there a blank sky at the best,
Here famine, sword, and fever-pit ;
Well, it's about time for a rest—
I'm fifty, and be hanged to it !

But stay, there's yet your twining arm,
My worn heart's hand-maiden and nurse,
You who my brooding spirit charm
Out of the dreams that are its curse ;
Ay, and the blossoms of your spring
Keep for this brow by winter knut,
A very angel ministering !—
I'm fifty, and a fig for it !

MY CHOICE.

DEAR daughter of the people, on me, the people's
bard,

The blossom of your Spring-tide you lavishly
bestow,

And if you grudged the guerdon 'twould be a trifle
hard,

For with my earliest warbling I soothed your
earliest woe !

Dream not that dames patrician my troth will e'er
entice,

Tho' robed in richest raiment, by proudest titles
styled ;

My muse will bear me witness I boast but one
device—

The offspring of the people, for me the people's
child !

When still a friendless stripling I trod Life's path
unknown,

And gazed upon the strongholds of opulence and
pride,

Think not that tho' an outcast upon the wide world
thrown,

I envied them their splendour or for their riches
sighed

Ah no, methought, the glory for evermore has
fled

Those halls where song enchanted and chivalry
beguiled,

Blot out their time-worn mottoes and write up this
instead—

The offspring of the people, for me the people's
child!

Out on your gilded chambers where Pleasure only
cloys,

Drear haunts of hollow grandeur and luxury for-
lorn,

Whose mirth is as the rocket which one brief shower
destroys,

Whose gladness an abortion that dies as soon as
born!

In shoes that shun a carpet, straw hat, and cotton
gown,

Amid the laughing meadows you all the week
run wild,

And every Sunday welcome your troubadour from
town—

The offspring of the people, for me the people's
child !

Point out to me the beauty, princess or simple dame,
Whose charm is more enchanting, whose grace is
more complete ;

A heart so full of freshness not one of them could
claim,

An eye so archly tender, a countenance so sweet !
The tyrant-trampled people its mark at last has
made,

I braved for them two sceptres, and victory on me
smiled,

With you and your devotion my prowess they've
repaid—

The offspring of the people, for me the people's
child !

THE OLD CORPORAL.

FALL in there, comrades, to your places !
Out with your swords, your muskets prime ;
I've got my pipe, had your embraces,
And now for my discharge !—it's time
My lads, don't you outlive your day,
Or you'll keep me in countenance !—
Well, in the regiment I've grown grey !—
Recruits, advance !
No whimpering now.
March, you know how,
Recruits, eyes front ! quick march !

The colonel, lads, insulted me,
I struck the coward back his lie ;
Well, by the code it's right, you see,
And the old corporal must die ;
Maybe it was the liquor, or
The devil made my old eyes dance—
Then I'd fought for the Emperor !

Recruits, advance !
No whimpering now
March, you know how,
Recruits, eyes front ! quick march !

Recruits, brave deeds may cost too dear ,
Sound limbs aren't after all bad things
I won this cross that's fastened here,
When we made nine-pins of the kings !
What drinks my fights have cost you, friends—
But at such gains best look askance,
For here's, you see, how glory ends !
Recruits, advance !
No whimpering now
March, you know how,
Recruits, eyes front ! quick march !

You from my home there, you go back
And take once more to minding sheep—
Look at those buds, they'll soon be black ;
How fresh our spring-buds used to keep !

What armfuls of them, too, I'd get
Before I clapped eyes on a lance !
God ! and my mother's living yet !—
Recruits, advance !
No whimpering now
March, you know how,
Recruits, eyes front ! quick march !

Who's that there following us and crying ?
Not our old sergerant's widow, eh ?
Ah, when that lad of hers seemed dying
I carried him one livelong day
They'd have joined Jacques beneath the snow
Had it not been for me, perchance,
So I shall have her prayers, I know.
Recruits, advance !
No whimpering now
March, you know how,
Recruits, eyes front ! quick march !

Sacre ! my pipe's out ; no, it's not ,
Good, I shall waste a match the less
Ah, to the Square so soon we've got ?—
I shan't want any bandages

My thanks, my lads, before I go

Get home again when you've the chance—

And for God's sake don't fire too low !

Recruits, advance !

No whimpering now.

March, you know how,

Recruits, eyes front ! quick march !

THE COURT CENSORS.

So, madame, it amuses you
 With Lise's morals to make free !
 Ah well, she's a grisette, it's true
 (King Cupid's aristocracy !),
 And with her coquetries a spell
 O'er half the Paris sparks has thrown !
 Upon your charms she doesn't dwell,
 Then, leave her character alone !

O'er Dives you deride her sway,
 Yet ill can you afford to laugh,
 Who every night in Jewry pay
 Your homage to the golden calf !
 Since, too, for no illiberal fee
 You rallied round the Empire's throne,
 When Lise attacks Legitimacy,
 st leave her character alone !

Sacre !
 Good, tho' inert for many a year,
 Ah, to th^{is} old age one often sees ,
 I shan't , certain saintly peer
 make a marchioness of Lise ;

Thanks to her arts and graces, he
Will soon emerge a duke full-blown ;
Lise once *au mieux* with Royalty,
You'll leave her character alone !

Converted by her coronet,
You ladies, now so prompt to sneer,
Her antecedents will forget
And freely at her fêtes appear !
But even splendour's apt to pall ;
So when some morning, pious grown,
She steals to the confessional,
We'll leave her character alone !

Virtue, I'd have you understand,
Is strangely various in its hue ,
Yours tallies with the titles grand,
Your lacquey bawls in front of you !
They to the highest stilts resort
Who most at heart to mud are prone—
Lise, if you ever go to Court,
I'll—leave your character alone !

EPIGRAM.

(On sending some songs to a young lady)

IN these songs that I send are portrayed
Two spells of dominion supreme,
Love, reduced in my case to a shade,
And Glory, that fugitive dream !
As to Love, you ne'er knelt at his shrine,
While Fame you incessantly woo ;
Yet Love I'm disposed to opine
Is the safer to trust of the two !

THE GOD OF GOOD FOLK.

THERE is a God of whom my prayers,
Poor as I am, no boon request ,
I watch the world and its affairs,
Cherish the good, forget the rest ;
And Pleasure, howe'er priests may prate,
My modest creed does not offend,
Gaily I drink, and leave my fate
To God, the good folk's friend !

Beside my pillow Poverty
Sits brooding, but I heed her not,
For thanks to Love and Hope, you see,
I dream a bed of down my lot.
Mine no stern God that priests create,
Gentle is he to whom I bend ,
Gaily I drink, and leave my fate
To God, the good folk's friend !

A conquering despot drunk with power,
Nations and dynasties down flings,
The dust his charger's proud hoofs shower
Begrimes the sacred brows of kings.

Crawl on, crawl on, ye fallen great,
What reck I how your glories end?
Gaily I drink, and leave my fate
To God, the good folk's friend !

'Mid France's miracles of Art,
Rare trophies won from Art's own land,
I've lived to see with burning heart
Her vanquishers triumphant stand !
Ay, Albion wreak on us your hate,
But tides can turn and fortunes mend ;
Gaily I drink, and leave my fate
To God, the good folk's friend !

Oh, our foreboding friend the priest,
With all his prophecies of gloom !
On hell-fire how he loves to feast,
The end of Time, the crack of doom !
Come, Cherubim, your cheeks inflate,
In flame and thunder-cloud descend !
Gaily I drink, and leave my fate
To God, the good folk's friend !

What, God a God of anger? Pooh,
He made all and loves all He made ;
The wine he gives ; my dear friends, you ;
Love which is His creating aid ;
The charms of all these dissipate
The nightmares priests rejoice to send !
Gaily I drink, and leave my fate
To God, the good folk's friend

OLD AGE.

(To my Comrades)

HIS finger, implacable Time
On our brows is preparing to lay,
We have still something left of our prime,
But it hasn't much longer to stay !
And yet at each step that we take
There is always a flower to unfold ;
If the best of Life's blessings we make,
We shall never, my comrades, grow old !

In vain would we conjure up mirth
With carol and wine and good cheer,
Of something there's somewhere a dearth,
It isn't the same as last year !
But if to the end of our days
We can quaver a song joyous-soul'd,
To Bacchus a bumper upraise,
We shall never, my comrades, grow old !

If at sixty we seek Beauty's shrine
 With the ardour of wild twenty-two,
Our homage she'll doubtless decline,
 And pronounce us too *passé* to woo !
But if to Time's edict we bend,
 And instead of a suit overbold,
Tender only the troth of a friend,
 We shall never, my comrades, grow old !

Life's journey then let us pursue,
 By the light that good fellowship lends,
And when Age with his ills steals in view,
 We'll confront him together, my friends !
Together, unheeding the blast,
 Together, defying the cold,
Arm in arm, side by side to the last,
 We shall never, shall never grow old !

TO MY GODCHILD

(On her christening-day.)

My godchild ! Why you should be so
The devil only knows, or heaven !
You scream at me, that's all I know,—
Not that I care, you're quite forgiven ;
Besides I've brought no bonbons—trying
In a godfather, I daresay ;
But come, my little one, stop crying,
I'll make you laugh instead some day !

Friendship confers on me the post ;
Friendship bestows on you the name ;
I'm but a toiler, at the most,
An honest toiler all the same
If then on presents you're relying,
Why, I have none to give away ;
But come, my little one, stop crying,
I'll make you laugh instead some day !

Hard as the best of us may try,
 We prate but to perform the less ;
Still may your godmother and I
 Add something to your happiness !
Tho' here be sobbing, there be sighing,
 A good heart nothing need dismay ;
So then, my little one, stop crying,
 I'll make you laugh instead some day !

Yes, for your wedding-song I'll sing,
 If by that time my song still flows,
And I'm not also sojourning
 Where Collé and Panard repose ;
But what, in shade and silence lying,
 While you're the gayest of the gay ?
No, no, my little one, stop crying,
 I'll make you laugh instead some day !

MY FINE.

TEN thousand francs, I'm fined ten thousand francs!

A handsome premium for a prison cell
From one who's passed his days in Penury's ranks,
And dines on crusts indifferently well !
Come, can't your Lordship say a trifle less?

"No no, your ribald pen's too long had sway,
His Majesty at least must have redress,
So in his name ten thousand francs you pay !"

Well, I submit ; but how d'you mean to spend
This cash with which I hoped to make so free?
In hiring help from some more learned friend,
Or on the prosecuting Counsel's fee?
Whose greasy purse gapes yonder to be lined?
The spy's, whose bill you've promised to defray?
He's sworn that I pollute the public mind ;
Two thousand francs to perjury we'll pay !

Yes, by your leave I'll parcel out my fine,
I've got no end of applicants enrolled !
What's that beneath the throne? Ye muses nine,
A harp ! Have all the palace bards caught cold?

Sing, my fine fellows, and requite your muse
By grabbing everything that comes your way,
(Tho', for God's sake, don't smash the Holy
Cruse !)—

Two thousand francs to flummery we'll pay !

Whom have we next? A heterogeneous crew
Of Brobdignagian nobles grandly starr'd !
Some pedigreed from Pepin, some more new,
But all with toadyism's brush well tarr'd !
A goodly slice from Fortune's cake they cut ;
Why not? Aren't they Brobdignags, who some
day

To their own height will raise poor Lilliput?—
Two thousand francs to flunkeydom we'll pay !

Now for copes, croziers, gold and silver plate,
Coats of arms, mitres, red-hats, retinues,
Palaces, abbeys, semi-regal state—

The Cloth's a desperate stickler for its dues !
One of their saintships, shocked at what I sing,
Has doomed me to the nether depths, they say !
Already my good angel's singed her wing !—
Three thousand francs to godliness we'll pay !

And now for the grand total ! Two and two
Make four, and three make seven, and three make
ten !—

La Fontaine wasn't fined a single sou,
But times, you see, were somewhat different then !
Louis was too magnanimous to treat
A poor bard so for just a pungent lay !—
Come, Mr Tipstaff, make out your receipt ;
I'll pay, long live his Majesty, I'll pay !

THE WHIPPER-SNAPPERS

BEING somewhat prone to sorcery,
A soothsayer I lately sought,
Who in a glass revealed to me
The boundless future, quick as thought !
And, O ye Gods, just think of it,
France, tho' a century had flown,
In one thing hadn't changed a bit !—
The "Barbons" still were on the throne !

Our race had into dwarfs declined,
Had come, in fact, to such a pass
That they can only be defined
As midges on the magic glass !
France scarce the shadow seemed to be
Of the great France I once had known,
So dwindled was her sovereignty !—
The "Barbons" still were on the throne !

What imps infinitesimal !
Jesuits barely two foot six !
Priests preternaturally small,
Each with an elfin crucifix !

All whom they blessed were brought to doom,
Even the old French Court had grown
Into a petty pupil-room !—

The “Barbons” still were on the throne !

All pigmy ! palace, magazine,
Trade, science, education, art !
Not seldom, too, upon the scene
Gay little famines played their part !
While in the lines of Lilliput,
To penny trumpets proudly blown,
A little army tried to strut !—

The “Barbons” still were on the throne !

At length upon the horoscope,
As climax to this vision drear,
A giant seemed to interlope,
Half shadowing the hemisphere ,
And as their little speeches pat
The mannikins prepared to drone,
He popped them all into his hat !—

The “Barbons” still were on the throne !

THE CROWN

(A Twelfth-Night Song.)

AND so the cake declares me king !
Come, subjects, crown me on the spot !
Don't spare the bottle, have your fling,
And envy me my royal lot !
What soul is there that isn't bent
Some time or other on renown ?
Who with his hat would be content,
Could he exchange it for a crown ?

The crown that cumbers Cæsar's brow,
Rubies and diamonds begem ;
Jacques claims his kingdom thro' the plough,
And hedge-flowers are his diadem !
Pomp for the circlet has to pay,
Love gives it gratis to the clown ;
Cæsar at night waves his away,
Jacques sleeps the sounder for his crown !

The sons of France, with sword and song,
To France a double glory bring ;
To them the laurels twice belong,
They conquer and of conquest sing !
If Mars his favour should refuse,
And Fortune's smile become a frown,
Haply their sceptre they may lose,
But never will they lose their crown !

Coy sylph, as yet content to wear
The crown that innocence bestows,
Courtiers already crowd your stair
With arts that lure and lips that gloze ;
Too soon they'll throng to bend the knee
And kiss the border of your gown ;
You'll listen to their flattery,
And some fine morning—lose your crown !

But, lose a crown ? Ah, that warns me
I'd better take good care of mine !
Well, I'm no tax-eater, you see,
And boast no prehistoric line,

So, subjects, brim your bumpers gay,
I've not a single dread to drown,
And till dessert's done, any way,
Don't make me abdicate my crown !

THE NIGHTINGALE

SLEEP reigns o'er the city once more,
Not a soul is astir in the street ;
From afar, beloved nightingale, pour
Thy strain so entrancingly sweet !
'Tis the moment when back to her sway
Soft Reverie hastens to wing,
'Tis the hour of all hours in the day,
Then sing to me, nightingale, sing !

Thou tellest of love that is strong,
And steadfast and tender and pure,
Then lift not to Phryne thy song,
Whose love is a feint and a lure !
Whose smiles are the smiles of the mart,
Whose honey envelops a sting—
My love, 'tis the love of the heart,
Then sing to me, nightingale, sing !

The miser who lives but to gloat
O'er the sight of his treasures untold,
Not thy richest, most rapturous note
One moment will wean from his gold !

How he shivers and shakes in his shoes
At the thought of what midnight may bring!
I'm poor, so can sport with the muse,
Then sing to me, nightingale, sing!

The courtier who year after year
His fetters is willing to wear,
Is he worthy one accent to hear
Of your rhapsody free as the air?
A minion! contented to be
At the beck and the call of a king!
When I bow, 'tis to Freedom, you see,
Then sing to me, nightingale, sing!

Your song into ecstasy grows,
With the base you can never have part!
Nature's voice thro' your utterance flows,
Each note brings her nearer my heart!
Each note wakes a dream of delight,
A perfume, a transport of spring!—
Till morning again glistens bright,
Ah, sing to me, nightingale, sing!

THE COSSACK'S SONG.

MY glorious steed, the Cossack's pride, the Cossack's one ally,
The war-trump of the North resounds, off like the north wind fly !
I scent the slain for plunder heaped, I snuff the cannon's breath,
Once more shall Death thy rider be, those hoofs the wings of Death !
Thy stately crest no ribands crown, thy saddle-cloth is bare,
Wait only for the battle's wreck, and thou shalt have thy share !
Hark to that neigh's fierce clarion, see how the foam he flings,
He tramples nations in his stride, and plants his hoof on kings !

Peace, who too long has toyed with it, to me thy
rein has tost,
The ancient landmarks of the West for evermore
are lost
Again I see the jewels gleam, again I clutch the
gold—
Off to the land of palaces we scoured so well of old!
The waters of the rebel Seine, as twice they've
done before,
Shall slake thy thirst, thou noble one, and cleanse
thy flanks of gore!
Hark to that neigh's fierce clarion, see how the
foam he flings,
He tramples nations in his stride, and plants his
hoof on kings!

Priests, nobles, princes, emperors, all huddled in
one tuck,
Cowering at last beneath the blow for centuries
unstruck,
Wail out from their captivity, "Come, crush us at
thy will,
We'll brook thy harshest tyrannies but to be tyrants
still!"

I go to then deliverance, I give them their desire,
Before my lance their Cross shall crouch, their
sceptres sweep the mire !

Hark to that neigh's fierce clarion, see how the
foam he flings,

He tramples nations in his stride, and plants his
hoof on kings !

Once in my lonely bivouac I saw a phantom loom,
A phantom of majestic form, whose dread eye
pierced the gloom

'Once more,' it cried, "my sovereignty rears its
immortal crest !"

Then with its shadowy battle-axe it pointed towards
the West.

'Twas the great son of Attila, whose shade walks
to this day,

The mighty monarch of the Huns , his bidding I
obey !

Hark to that neigh's fierce clarion, see how the
foam he flings,

He tramples nations in his stride, and plants his
hoof on kings !

That pyramid of glory which has turned proud
Europe's brain,
That armoury of knowledge she has called upon
in vain,
Once I leap into that saddle, once I give that rein
a shake,
Will be even as the sand-grains thou wilt scatter
in thy wake !
Court, palace, temple, treasure, law, tradition,
custom, creed,
All shall vanish, and for ever, in the whirlwind of
thy speed !
Hark to that neigh's fierce clarion, see how the
foam he flings,
He tramples nations in his stride, and plants his
hoof on kings !

A METAMORPHOSIS.

WHAT, madam, *you* Lisette !
You with your fine toilette,
Your fashionable curls,
Your diamonds and pearls !
No, no, you're not Lisette,
She was a gay grisette !
 To bear that name
 You've lost all claim,
No, no, you're not Lisette !

Your feet, in satin shod,
Shrink from the vulgar sod ;
- Your cheeks with bloom abound ;
How much is it a pound ?
No, no, you're not Lisette,
She was a gay grisette !
 To bear that name
 You've lost all claim,
No, no, you're not Lisette !

With gauds of every kind
Your boudoir's grandly lined ;
Even your very bed
Is ormolu, 'tis said !
No, no, you're not Lisette,
She was a gay grisette !
 To bear that name
 You've lost all claim,
No, no, you're not Lisette !

Your smile, so arch of old,
Has grown superbly cold ;
Jests you consider low,
You're now a wit, you know !
No, no, you're not Lisette,
She was a gay grisette !
 To bear that name
 You've lost all claim,
No, no, you're not Lisette !

Ah, for the days gone by,
When, throned six storeys high,
Love's empress, you were fain
In calico to reign !

No, no, you're not Lisette,
She was a gay grisette !
 To bear that name
 You've lost all claim,
No, no, you're not Lisette !

Your sprightly glances then
Would witch a dozen men,
And yet you weren't somehow,
Well—not what you are now !
No, no, you're not Lisette,
She was a gay grisette !
 To bear that name
 You've lost all claim,
No, no, you're not Lisette !

Yet, why my venom vent ?
You're after all content ,
In jewels, dinners, dress,
You've found your happiness !
No, no, you're not Lisette,
She was a gay grisette !
 To bear that name
 You've lost all claim,
No, no, you're not Lisette !

Well, *chacun a son goût* !
I'm much too low for you,
For me you're far too high,
So—to your Grace good-bye !
No, no, you're not Lisette,
She was a gay grisette !
 To bear that name
 You've lost all claim,
No, no, you're not Lisette !

MY CALLING

TUMBLLED upon the world
An ugly wretched wight,
Here buffeted, there hurled,
Mankind against a mite,
When oft my misery
A plaintive moan would wring,
The good God said to me,
“Sing, poor little one, sing !”

By rich, and proud, and great
Down-ridden, overborne ;
Now cowering 'neath their hate,
Now writhing 'neath their scorn,
No matter where I flee
Their insults still they fling !
The good God says to me,
“Sing, poor little one, sing !”

Filled ever with the dread
Of starving, a lone waif,
To earn my dole of bread
'Neath Labour's chain I chafe ,

As, pining to be free,
I stave off Hunger's sting,
The good God says to me,
"Sing, poor little one, sing!"

In pity for my woes
Love soothed me for awhile,
But with Youth's waning rose
He too has ceased to smile ;
As Beauty spurns my plea,
And wayward Love takes wing,
The good God says to me,
"Sing, poor little one, sing!"

To sing (be sure I'm right!),
To sing God sent me here,
And those my songs delight,
To them at least I'm dear!
When the wine circles free,
And fêtes their frolics bring,
The good God says to me,
"Sing, poor little one, sing!"

THE WISEACRE.

My excellent friends, I've a sermon to give,
So pass round the wine and my homily heed ;
In freedom and ease let us all of us live,
Whatever your destiny, stick to that creed !
Make pastime your object, and pleasure and glee ;
From grandeur and riches turn frowning away—
Such, at least, is the precept propounded by me,
Whose hair with sheer wisdom is fast growing
grey !

My excellent friends, if you have a spare hour,
And are willing to spend it in frolic and mirth,
Don't disdain jolly Bacchus, whose magic has power
To dispel all the cares that encumber the earth !
One sip from his beaker, whate'er the brand be,
Makes the gloomiest heart in the universe gay—
Such, at least, is the precept propounded by me,
Whose hair with sheer wisdom is fast growing
grey !

My excellent friends, what are laughter and wine
If Love lend not also his infinite charms?
Then bask in the glances of Beauty divine,
And spend every moment you can in her arms!
Her gifts far excel, as we all must agree,
The choicest that Glory and Wealth can array—
Such, at least, is the precept propounded by me,
Whose hair with sheer wisdom is fast growing
grey!

My excellent friends, it is thus we defeat
The deadliest ills that Misfortune can shower,
So feast on Life's honey while yet it is sweet,
Too long left untasted 'twill only turn sour!
While young, with the good things before you make
free,
Time enough when you're doting the piper to
pay—
Such, at least, is the precept propounded by me,
Whose hair with sheer wisdom is fast growing
grey!

THE REFUSAL

(Addressed to General Sebastiani)

A MINISTER offers me gold !
Not a creature, of course, to be told,
 Not a word to appeal in the press !
My wants are but few, to be sure,
And yet, when I think of the poor,
 I long to be rich, I confess !

With the poor, as the world is aware,
Stars and ribands one cannot well share,
 But gold is a different thing !
Yes, just for a hundred francs down,
I'd cheerfully pawn both my crown
 And my sceptre, if I were a king !

When money does come in my way,
It goes the next moment astray,
 How and where I can't really explain ;

My pocket is cursed with a hole
Which my grandmother, excellent soul,
All her days would have stitched at in vain !

All the same, my good friend, keep your gold !
In my teens, if the truth must be told,
Proud Freedom I fervently woo'd ,
Yes, I, who have vaunted in song
Lax loveliness all my life long,
Am wedded in fact to a prude !

Ay, Liberty, Sir, you must learn,
Is a bigot inflexibly stern,
Who, heedless of time and of place,
Directly the tinsel she spies
On Servility's livery, cries,
" Away with that rascally lace ! "

Your dross she an insult would deem !
But, frankly, how came you to dream
Of attempting to treat with *my* muse ?
As it is, I'm at least a good " sou,"
But lacquer me over, and you
Make me counterfeit ev'n among " sous."

Keep your pelf ; I'm no hero, I fear,
But if the world happens to hear
 Of this secret you think so profound,
You'll know whence the story has sprung—
My heart's like a lyre newly strung,
 One touch, and you make it resound !

MY REPUBLIC.

I'VE got Republics on the brain,
 Now that I've seen so much of kings,
 Have one, in fact, myself in train,
 Of which I mean to pull the strings !
 Its only commerce shall be wine,
 Its only code a jest-book be,
 Its only business well to dine,
 Its only motto, Liberty !

Come, my dear friends, your glasses fill !
 The Chambers are convoked to-day,
 And for a first decree we will
 On *ennui* our proscription lay—
 But stop, "proscription" ?—I taboo
 That word in regions ruled by me,
 With *ennui* what have we to do ?
 Pleasure alone crowns Liberty !

Enjoyment and luxuriousness
 We'll unrelentingly divorce ;
 Fetters no more shall Thought repress,
 Bacchus shall put that law in force !